

ARNOLD ARBORETUM

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

BULLETIN
OF
POPULAR INFORMATION

JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

JUNE 14, 1915

Yellow-flowered Roses. Among wild Roses with yellow flowers are a few hardy plants which are not often seen in American gardens. There are five species of single yellow-flowered Roses which are found only in the region from the Caucasus to the Himalayas, in central Asia and in western and northern China. Among all the Roses of North America, Europe (except the Caucasus), Siberia and Japan, there is not a wild yellow-flowered Rose although some varieties of the Scotch Rose, *R. spinosissima*, have flowers more or less tinged with yellow, like the variety *hispida*, which has been covered with pale yellow flowers in the Shrub Collection this year, and Harison's Yellow Rose which was raised by Mr. George Harison of New York about 1830 and is believed to be a hybrid between the Scotch Rose and the Austrian Briar. It is a very hardy, free-growing and vigorous plant, and never fails to produce large crops of pale yellow semi-double flowers. It was a very popular plant at one time in the northern states, and it is still found in most old-fashioned gardens.

One of the yellow-flowered Roses, *R. simplicifolia*, from Persia is not hardy. Of the four species which are hardy here *Rosa Hugonis* from western China is the earliest to bloom, and has been described in an earlier issue of these Bulletins. In the Arboretum the flowers are larger than those of the other yellow-flowered species and the plants are more vigorous and flower more freely. Judging by the plants in the Arboretum which have been growing here for several years this will be a valuable garden plant for the northern states. The next species to flower here, *R. Ecae*, is a very spiny shrub with small leaves and pale yellow flowers not more than an inch in diameter. It is a native of Afghanistan, where it is common on dry moun-

tain ridges, and of Samarkand and although of some botanical interest it has little to recommend it as a garden plant in this region. In 1820 an English botanist found in a collection of Chinese drawings in London the picture of a double yellow Rose to which he gave the name of *R. xanthina*, and many years later the single-flowered form of this Rose was found growing wild in Mongolia by the French missionary David. English botanists have usually confused this Chinese Rose with *R. Ecae* and it apparently had not been cultivated in the United States or Europe until 1908 when the Arboretum received from the Department of Agriculture seeds of this Rose gathered in China by its collector, Mr. F. N. Meyer. Both the single and double-flowered forms were raised from this seed and have flowered in the Arboretum this year. The flowers are larger than those of *R. Ecae* and bright clear yellow. These Roses appear to be perfectly at home in the Arboretum, but it is too soon to speak of their value in North American gardens. The single and the double-flowered varieties are much cultivated in the gardens of Peking. The last of the hardy yellow-flowered Roses, the so-called Austrian Briar, has suffered from too many names. Among others it has been called *R. eglanteria* and *R. lutea*, but its oldest name by which it must be known is *R. foetida*, an unfortunate name given to it because the flowers have a slight odor which some persons do not find pleasant. Although long known in gardens as the Austrian Briar, it is probably nowhere a native of western Europe but an inhabitant of the Crimea, the Caucasus, Persia, and probably central Asia. It has handsome bright yellow flowers and when it grows well is one of the most beautiful of all single-flowered Roses, but in this climate it does not always succeed and the plants are usually short-lived. It has never flowered better, perhaps, in the Arboretum than it has this year. The Copper Austrian Briar, which has the petals yellow on the outer surface and dark copper color on the inner surface, is believed to be a variety of *R. foetida* (var. *bicolor*). In this climate this handsome plant is usually short-lived and is not a very satisfactory garden plant. There is a double-flowered variety of *R. foetida* in the collection (var. *persiana*), known as the Persian Yellow Rose. This plant was sent to England from Persia in 1838 and is sometimes cultivated in American gardens. The flowers are more beautiful than those of the Harison Rose, but in this climate it does not grow so vigorously.

Kolkwitzia amabilis. This native of western China is the only representative of a genus which is related to *Diervilla* and *Abelia*, and although it reached the Arboretum in 1908 it is now flowering for the first time. The flowers are borne in pairs on long stems at the ends of short, lateral, leafy branchlets an inch long with a two-lobed oblique corolla deep rose color in the bud, becoming paler after opening, the inner surface of the three divisions of the lower lobe being white blotched with orange color at the base. *Kolkwitzia* is an erect growing shrub with slender stems and branches and is apparently perfectly hardy. The Arboretum specimen is now nearly six feet high and can be seen covered with flowers in the Shrub Collection between the Honeysuckles and the *Diervillas*.

Abelia Engleriana. *Abelia* is a genus of small shrubs related to *Diervilla* and *Lonicera* with small oblique flowers in pairs. *Abelia grandiflora*, which is believed to be a hybrid, is much grown in the middle and southern states, and although it usually suffers at the north plants in sheltered positions in the Arboretum often flower. *Abelia Engleriana*, a native of western China, appears to be much hardier and promises to be a useful small plant for the borders of shrubberies. The flower is three-quarters of an inch long, the corolla light rose color on the outer surface and very pale yellow on the inner surface with conspicuous yellow blotches at the base of the lobes of the lower lip. In size, shape and color the flowers have a strong resemblance to those of *Kolkwitzia amabilis*.

Syringa reflexa. This is perhaps the most distinct of the Lilacs discovered by Wilson in western China. It is a stout and vigorous shrub, with foliage which in general appearance resembles that of *S. villosa*. It flowers freely and the narrow flower-clusters, which are nine or ten inches long, arch downward from near the base. The plants are perhaps handsomest before the flower-buds open, for these are bright red and more conspicuous than the open flowers which are pale rose color. It appears to be perfectly hardy and gives promise of being a first-rate garden plant.

Syringa tomentella, another of the west China species, is also flowering well this year. The flowers, which are produced in large loose clusters, are longer and more slender than those of *S. reflexa* and are of the palest rose color. The foliage, like that of most of the new Chinese species, resembles that of *S. villosa*.

Styrax japonica. Attention is called to the group of these plants on Hickory Path where they are perfectly at home, although in other parts of the Arboretum they have not proved entirely hardy. This is one of the handsomest of the species of this handsome genus, and every year at this time these plants are covered with white flowers hanging down from the branches on long slender stalks. That it is perfectly at home in this position is shown by the fact that hundreds of seedlings spring up every year under the old plants.

Dwarf Buckeyes. In a bed in the Horsechestnut Group, which is on the right-hand side of the Meadow Road entering from the Jamaica Plain Gate, the new shrubby *Aesculus georgiana* with its short compact clusters of red and yellow flowers has been in bloom again this year and has proved itself a fine plant in this climate. With it is blooming one of the southern scarlet-flowered Buckeyes, *Aesculus discolor*, var. *mollis*, sometimes found in books under the name of *Aesculus austrina*. This is a common and widely distributed shrub or small tree from Georgia to Texas and southeastern Missouri, and is the only red-flowered Buckeye found in the territory west of the Mississippi River. Long overlooked or confounded with other species by botanists, it has only recently been brought into gardens. It is one of the handsomest flowering plants of the southern states, and it is fortunate that it is able to flourish in the Arboretum where it has now been growing for the last ten years.

Aesculus Harbisonii is also in this group. This shrub is the last of the Horsechestnuts and Buckeyes in the collection to unfold its leaves, which do not appear until those of most of the other trees and shrubs of this family are nearly full grown and, with the exception of *Aesculus parviflora* is the last of the group to flower. Two plants sprang up in the Arboretum nursery ten years ago among seedlings of *Aesculus georgiana*, and the mixture of glands and hairs on the petals of the flowers show that it is a hybrid between species belonging to different sections of the genus, no doubt *A. georgiana*, and *A. discolor* var. *mollis*, which also appeared among these seedlings. Whatever its origin *A. Harbisonii* is a good garden plant which has proved itself perfectly hardy in the Arboretum where it has flowered now regularly for three years. The stem and branches of the flower-cluster and the calyx of the flower are rose color, and the petals are canary yellow slightly streaked with red toward the margins; the lateness of their appearance adds to the value of these shrubs which are now three or four feet high and covered with flowers.

Sophora vicifolia. There are not many shrubs with blue flowers which are hardy in this climate and none of them are as satisfactory as this *Sophora*, which is a native of central and western China where it is a common undershrub in dry hot valleys. In the Arboretum it is a shapely plant about four feet high and perfectly hardy; it produces its small blue and white pea-shaped flowers in great profusion and blooms every year. It is one of the most attractive of the small shrubs of recent introduction. It can be seen on Hickory Path near Centre Street.

Some species of Mock Orange (*Philadelphus*) are already flowering. The earliest to bloom in the collection are *P. Schneekii*, var. *Jackii*, a plant discovered by Mr. Jack in Korea a few years ago, and *P. hirsutus* from the southern Appalachian region. The former is a dwarf shrub with erect stems and rather small flowers, and is chiefly valuable for its earliness. *P. hirsutus* is also a small-flowered species and in cultivation is a large, loose-growing shrub of unattractive habit. There is a large collection of species, varieties and hybrids of *Philadelphus* in the Arboretum; they are planted in the Shrub Collection and in a supplementary collection forming a large group on the Bussey Hill Road opposite the Lilac Group. Many useful hardy shrubs with beautiful flowers are found among these plants which will be in bloom now for several weeks and will repay a careful study by persons interested in such plants.

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